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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 000387

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DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/SE, EUR/PRA, T

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/13/2019
TAGS: [KNNP](#) [TRGY](#) [ETTC](#) [MNUC](#) [PARM](#) [ENRG](#) [IAEA](#)
SUBJECT: NSG - TURKEY WILLING TO TAKE THE CHAIR, UNLIKELY
TO CHANGE ENR POSITION

REF: UNVIE VIEN 101

Classified By: Pol-Mil Counselor Anthony Godfrey, 1.4 (b,d)

¶1. (C) Turkey's willingness to chair the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG - see reftel) is a welcome sign of its increasing engagement in international nonproliferation efforts, and we expect that, from a management standpoint, Turkey will be able to serve effectively as chair. We want to sound a note of caution, however, that there remains a fundamental disagreement with Turkey on proposed guidelines on the transfers of enrichment and reprocessing (ENR) equipment and technology. We would caution that it is unlikely that Ankara would change its position on this issue in connection with its NSG chairmanship bid.

¶2. (C) MFA officials continue to maintain that Turkey:

-- Believes that members of the NSG and NPT in "good standing" should have the right to obtain not only nuclear enrichment equipment, but the know-how to develop an indigenous enrichment capability;

-- Does not support a "black box" requirement or any approach that could potentially close the door for Turkey to obtain the know-how to engage in nuclear enrichment if Turkey decides to pursue this in the future (interlocutors stress that no decision has been taken for Turkey to pursue nuclear enrichment) ; and

-- Seeks to engage in a "drafting exercise" with the US to produce a compromise ENR text that would be mutually acceptable.

¶3. (C) While we support UNVIE's recommendation that we use the occasion of Turkey's expressed interest in chairing the NSG to renew our call for Turkish cooperation on ENR transfer guidelines, we do not believe Turkey's position will shift absent more direct, high-level consultations. If we hope to make progress on this issue with Turkey, we recommend sending to Ankara a team that can:

-- More fully discuss with Turkish policy makers the objectives and terms of the current draft;
-- Develop a better understanding of Turkey's technical and political concerns;
-- Try to convince Turkey to support the guidelines as the best way to balance the rights of NPT states to pursue peaceful uses of nuclear energy and our shared interest in curtailing the spread of nuclear technology; and possibly
-- Explore compromise language that might help address Turkey's concerns while meeting our overall objective of establishing robust guidelines that will limit the spread of nuclear enrichment technology.

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Jeffrey